



Canadian Military Mail Study Group

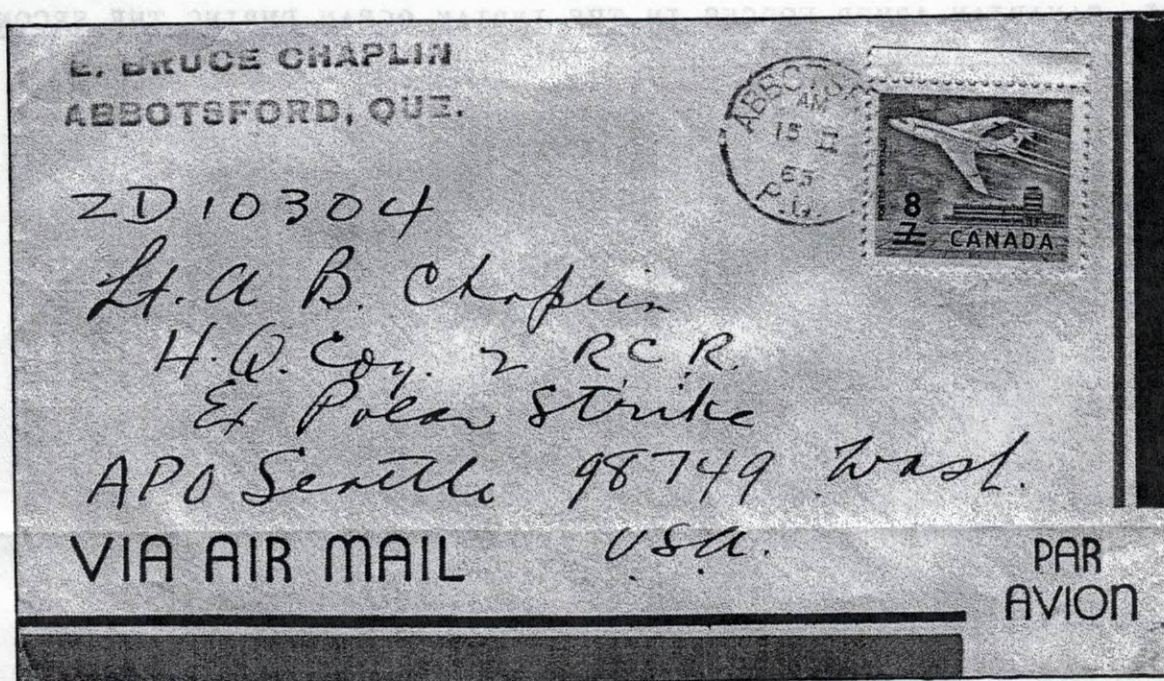
NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2017

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EXERCISE POLAR STRIKE, 1965--By Jerome C. Jarnick

With the onset of the Cold War, NATO forces conducted numerous exercises in the Arctic to develop strategies and to test men and equipment under extreme cold. Canada, Alaska, and Norway were frequent locales for the war games.



Exercise Polar Strike was a large scale, mock warfare exercise conducted from January 25 to February 16, 1965. [Some]

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14,000 members of the United States Army and Air Force under the direction of Lt. Gen. R.J. Reeves, USAF, were joined by 600 Canadian paratroopers. The exercise took place in an 8,000 square mile tract of central Alaska, along the Alaska Highway about 250 miles south of Fairbanks.

Mail to and from participants in these short-lived exercises is rare. The cover shown was mailed to Lt. Chaplin of the Royal Canadian Regiment serving with the Exercise Force from Abbotsford, Quebec on February 15, 1965. Mail service to US APO 98749 was provided through Seattle, Washington. The Army Post Office itself was located at the Headquarters of the U.S. Army Alaska (USARAL) at Fort Richardson adjacent to the city of Anchorage. [The Royal Canadian Regiment was no stranger to winter exercises after this venture in Alaska. The 1st Battalion took part in northern Norway in "Arctic Express" in February and March 1978, along with other NATO forces, and in March 1982 when 14,000 NATO soldiers and airmen conducted manoeuvres 150 miles north of the Arctic Circle. Mail from these would also be a challenge to find. Ed.]

PART II: CANADIAN ARMED FORCES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR, RCAF TRANS-OCEAN FLIGHTS--By Robert Toombs

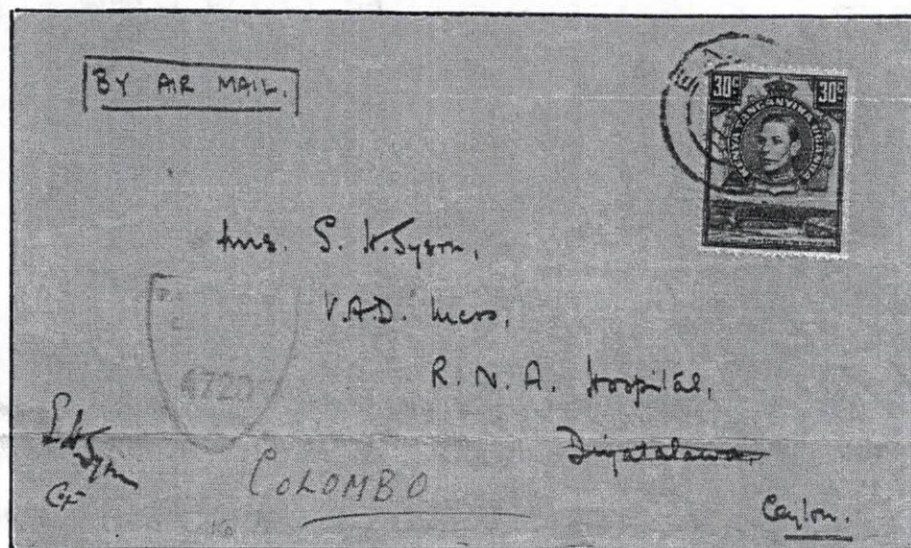


FIG.6. K.U.T. postage of 0.30 shilling, shield censor 4720, with indistinct date and EAPO #. This was selected because of the "By Air Mail" manuscript designation and the surface rate. The sender is Lt. S.K. Syson and the addressee is likely that of his wife (a nurse?) at a hospital in Ceylon. The letter qualified as service mail and was likely flown on the trans-ocean communications flight routing: Mombasa--Seychelles--Addu Atoll--Koggala (see FIG.1). The letter is postally redirected to Colombo (red ink) on arrival in Ceylon.

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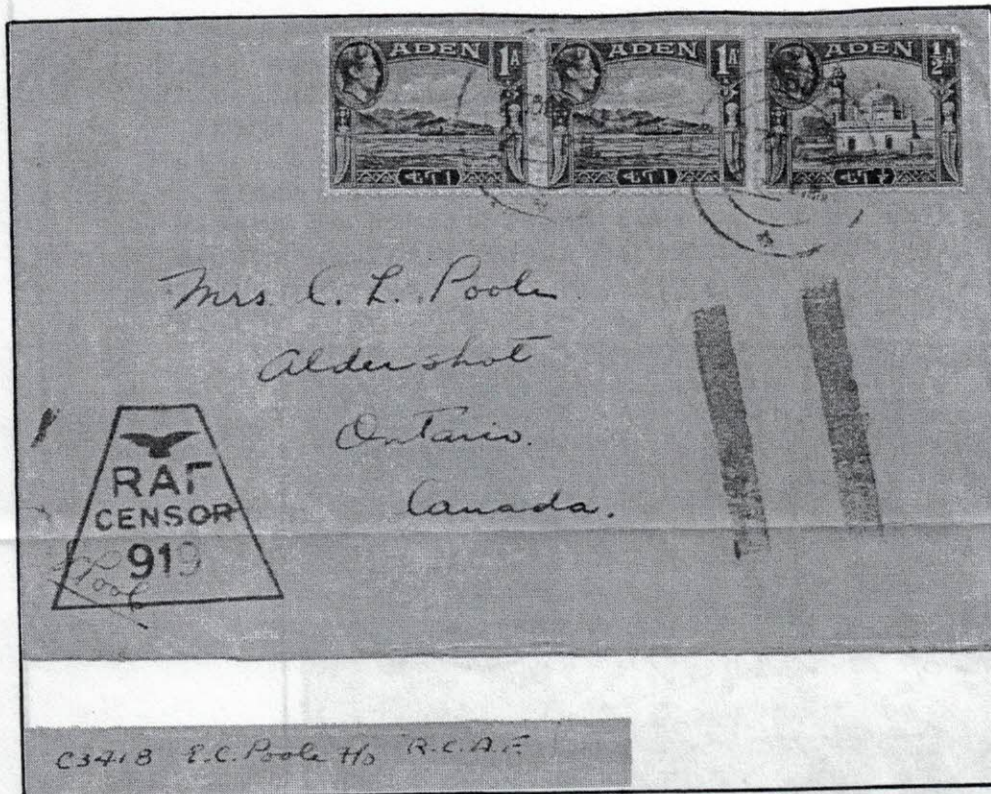
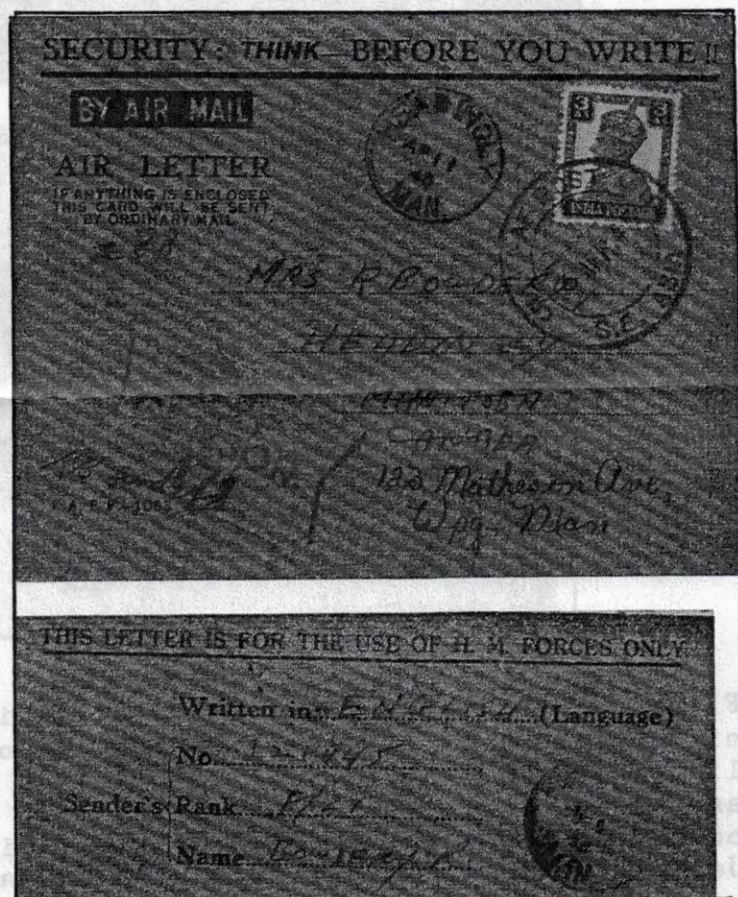


FIG. 7. Flying Officer E.C. Poole was an RCAF radar specialist. It is not known which squadron he flew with. The military concession rate is $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas (1 anna less than the civilian rate) from Aden for mails under the supervision of the Indian Post Office. Censor mark is Colley & Garrard Type R10/919 (Aden). The postmark is December 29, 1941 at Aden. The postal receiving mark (on reverse) in Ontario is March 28, 1942; a transit time of three months. The route was likely via Durban by sea.

FIG. 8. Air Letter bearing 3 annas postage postmarked April 6, 1945 at RAFPOST 5/ S.E. Asia. The censor mark Type R17/171 is attributed to Calcutta. The writer, RCAF F/L R. Bowdery, was flying with RAF No. 200 Squadron.

Earlier in the war No. 200 Squadron served in Gibraltar then at Gambia, West Africa, where it was re-equipped with liberator bombers on anti-submarine patrol. In March 1944 the squadron relocated to Madras in India as part of South East Asia Command (SEAC). After carrying out only a few missions there it relocated to Bengal for special duties; mainly supplying and delivering guerrilla parties into Burma and Malaya.



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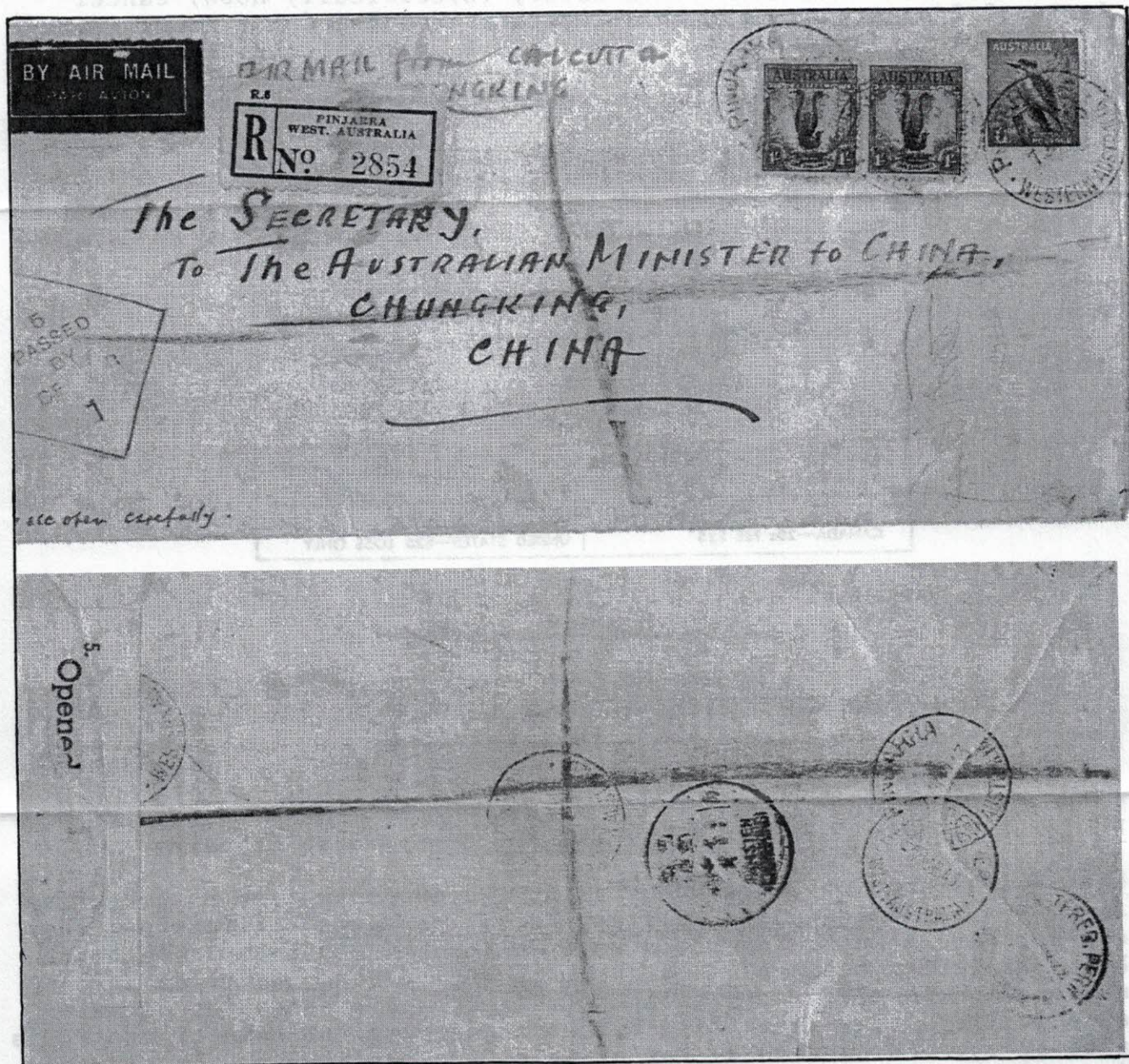
FIG.9. RCAF F/O J.R. Gowans flew with RCAF No. 413 Squadron based in Ceylon. On November 3, 1943 while on patrol off India's Cochin coast, Gowans sighted a submarine and attacked, dropping depth charges. The German submarine U-168 was damaged and forced to return to the German submarine pens in Penang, Malaya for repair. The letter shown was mailed July 13, 1944 and received on August 17, 1944 in Kelowna, B.C.; transit time of about five weeks. The censor mark is Colley & Garrard Type R17/458, RAF Base Post Office, Ceylon.



FIG.10. [Next page] RCAF and Trans-Indian Ocean flight--a series of seven proving flights were carried out by RCAF No. 413 (Catalina flying boat) Squadron in May 1943 between Koggala, Ceylon, and Perth, Western Australia. The only land on the 3,000+ km. ocean route was Cocos Island (see map in FIG.1) within range of Japanese fighter aircraft. The inaugural flight left Koggala for

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Perth on June 18, 1943 with 52 lbs. of diplomatic and troop mail. Flying time southbound was 27 hours and 50 minutes. The following cover was carried on the inaugural return leg, northbound, Perth to Koggala. This diplomatic airmail letter, franked 2 Sh. 6d with registration, is addressed to the Australian Ambassador in Chungking, China. Following this, scheduled flights were managed by BOAC/Quantas.



INFORMATION ON Q.E.II-ERA MILITARY MOON'S DESIRED

Michael Sagar wrote: "I am a collector/documenter of Money Order Office Number cancellations of Canada. Years ago, I reported a num-

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ber of MOON cancels to Doug Sayles that were unlisted in his military cancel collection. I recall that he had a website that listed all the new reports, but if it did exist, I can't find it [Mike Street supplied the: [http://www.bnaps.org/books/updates/Sayles-Vol-3-UPDATE June2007.pdf](http://www.bnaps.org/books/updates/Sayles-Vol-3-UPDATE%20June2007.pdf) site.Ed.]. I am in the process of putting the finishing touches on a catalogue of MOON cancels that will include a military component. My question: has anyone carried on Doug's research related to Q.E.II-era military (specifically MOON) cancellations? I am trying to cobble together as much of the known dates of usage as I can find. My target date to get all information in is the end of March". [Apologies for this late notice but I am sure if members do have additional/new reports, Mike would be interested. Contact him at:

gailandmike@shaw.ca

CERTIFICATE OF POST OFFICE REGISTRATION		NO. <u>946</u>	DATE STAMP 1272 R.C.A.F. STATION ST-HUBERT 1 X 1959 P.Q. P.M. INITIALS
FEE	<u>20</u> c	AGAINST LOSS ONLY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
MAXIMUM INDEMNITY PAYABLE			
CANADA—20c FEE \$25		UNITED STATES—\$25 LOSS ONLY	

R.C.A.F. STATION, ST. HUBERT, P.O.
M.O.O.N. #1272
(FORMERLY MPO 404)
OPENED MAY 5, 1953--CLOSED OCTOBER 28, 1962
B & T #M19-91

[ex.Editor]

MULTIPLE HAMMERS FOR SOME GREAT WAR FPO'S--By Wayne Schnarr

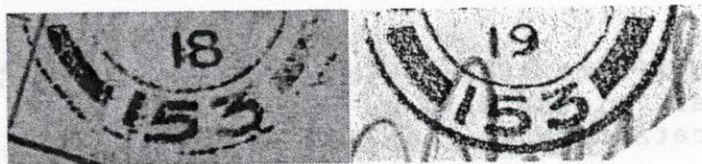
When Bailey and Toop were undertaking the enormous task of preparing their two volume Canadian Military Postal Markings publication, they did not have some of the tools we take for granted today--computers, high-resolution scanners, and the internet to find and trade information. Working from covers on their desks and photocopies of variable quality, they identified different hammers for some of the FPO's used by the CPC in France. For example, looking just at the series from M6-132 through M6-162 in B & T Volume I, ten FPO's (142, 146, 168, 169, 182, 183, 184, 186, 188, and 189) have two hammers illustrated.

While working on Volume I of the updated BNAPS catalogue series, I have found two hammers for five additional FPO's in this group (153, 156, 185, 187, and 190). The differences are most easily seen by ex-

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amining the FPO numbers and the bars on either side.

153: the left scan below is very similar to M6-138 in B&T. The right scan below has thicker bars and the 5 is distinctly different.



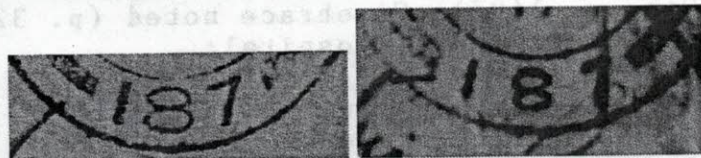
156: the left scan below is very similar to M6-142 in B&T. The top of the 6 in the right scan below is longer and distinctly different.



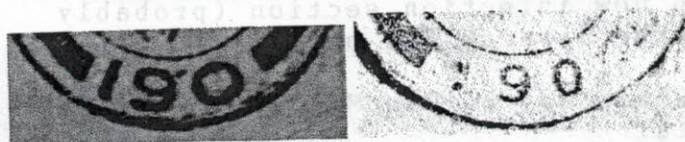
185: the left scan below is very similar to M6-154 in B&T. The numbers and the spacing in the scan on the right below are completely different.



187: the left scan below is very similar to M6-157 in B&T. The numbers and the spacing in the scan on the right below are completely different.



190: the left scan below is very similar to M6-162 in B&T. The numbers and the spacing in the scan on the right below are completely different.



Canadian brigades were the first to use hammers for FPO's 185, 187, and 190 (Phase 3 from 1917-02-10 to 1917-06-30), which were then passed on to British and Australian troops (1). FPO 153 was assigned to at least four and up to six British brigades and FPO 156 was used outside the B.E.F. before the Canadians used them in Phase 6 (1918-08-01 to 1919-02-01). When the brigades using a specific FPO changed at a security phase transition, we do not know if used hammers were passed on, new hammers were issued, or there was a combination of

[Cont'd.]

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new and used hammers.

How many different hammers can we expect for each FPO? There are three different fonts/spacing in these five pairs--a normal font, a more stylish font with the angled 5, and the smaller size--wider spacing. I expect that a more detailed examination could reveal more varieties.

*If you have covers/cards with FPO or APO markings used by the CPC in Europe during the Great War, please send me high-resolution scans so I can make the new catalogue as complete as possible.

*If you have seen articles on this subject please send me the information.

As always, thank you in advance for your help.

REFERENCE

- (1) Kennedy & Crabb, The Postal History of the British Army in World War I--Before and After: 1903-1929 (1977).

MORE ON "CANADIAN NURSING SISTER AT SHEPHEARD'S HOTEL"--By David Collyer

David wrote in to remind us about John Firebrace's 1991 British Empire Campaigns and Occupations in the Near East, 1914-1924: A Postal History (London: Christie's Robson Lowe) related to the previous article by John Watson (NL#225, Dec. 2016, p. 1487). Firebrace noted (p. 324) the following details on No.21 British General Hospital:

--02/05/1915-Sailed from England to Malta and Egypt for Ras-el-Tin, Alexandria

--20/02/1916-Accommodation raised to 1,140 beds

--20/12/1919-Accepted patients from Isolation Hospital in new infection section (probably relates to the Spanish Flu pandemic)

--Hospital became Ras-el-Tin Military Convalescent Hospital

Thanks David!

EDMONTON NATIONAL SPRING SHOW 2017 PALMARES

Members did very well with their exhibits at the above exhibition:

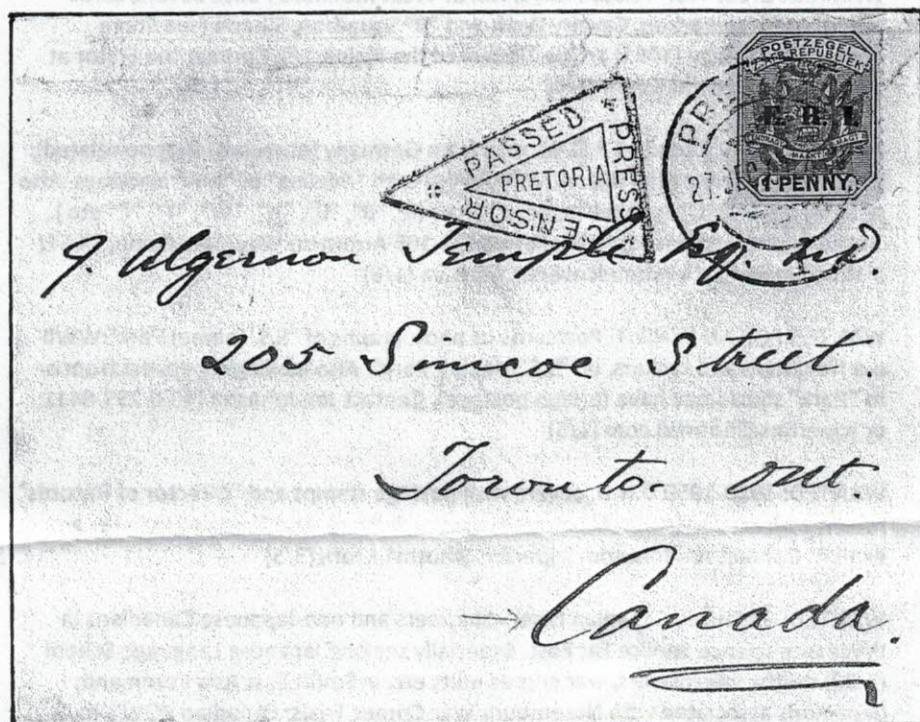
Multi-Frame Exhibits: Gold/APS Medal of Excellence/PHSC Best BNA Postal History Exhibit, Jon Johnson, "WWI Canadian Army Nursing Sis-
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ters Serving Overseas"; Large Vermeil/BNAPS Research Award/PHSC Ritch Toop Best Military Postal History Exhibit, Hal Kellett, "The Military in Canada, 1812-1905"; Vermeil/BNAPS "Best 2x4", Hal Kellett, "Force 'C'-The Canadian Army in Hong Kong: 1941-1945".

Congratulations to the above and other members with non-military exhibits!

ANGLO-BOER WAR MAIL CENSORSHIP TO CANADA--By Hal Kellett

The first recorded censorship dates from October 10, 1899 (the day before war was declared) in Pretoria. British censorship began at Durban, recorded from October 12, 1899. Further censorship developed for Prisoner of War mail in Cape Town and Natal; for all mail in British occupied parts of the Republics; and by late 1900 in many parts of Cape Colony. The variety of seals and handstamps is enormous. This cover is dated at Pretoria December 21, 1901 to Toronto, Canada. It carries a black Pretoria censor marking and a Toronto January 31, 1902 cancel on the back.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Members are reminded of the upcoming 2017 BNAPEX/CALTAPEX show on September 1-3 at the Hyatt Regency in Calgary. Exhibit space is limited so members should get those forms in asap! On July 20-23, 2017 the Postal History Society of Canada will be sponsoring a Symposium at the Hamilton Sheraton Hotel in Hamilton, Ontario. For more information see: postalhistorycanada.net/php/Symposium/

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Dear Study Group Members: Mike and I hope that spring has sprung in your part of the world (while there is snow on the ground here!). You will find Bob Toombs' Part II of his article on RCAF Trans-Indian Ocean flights in this issue. Many thanks to other authors who have sent along submissions. It is YOUR newsletter and YOUR support is always appreciated. ORAPEX 2017 is just around the corner at the RA Centre in Ottawa, Ontario from May 5-6. For more information contact member Mike Powell at (613) 421-3576 or see: <http://www.orapex.ca> (.) Good luck to exhibitors and good hunting for those treasures! Military mail is still strong on the market which bodes well for the future. Good collecting!

SMALL ADS

Looking for something? Have something for sale? Why not try our small ads? Buy/Sell/Trade. Still only \$1 per issue (Canadian stamps @ face ok). Copy and payment to the Editor please.

WANTED: Great War- related Royal North-West Mounted Police covers/cards including "A" Squadron, Cavalry Draft and "B" Squadron, Siberia (see Steve Luciuk's Anthology (1991) article "Riders of the Plains...."). Contact the Editor at blueputtees@hotmail.com (1/4)

WANTED: WWII Canadian P.O.W. mail from Germany (especially Dieppe-related); Canadian military postal history WWI/WWII with "missing" or "KIA" markings. Also seeking the WWII "alphabet" special forces (ie. "B", "C", "N", "W", "Y", "Z" etc.). Scans or photocopies to: Hal Kellett, #412-106 Armistice Way, Saskatoon, SK S7J 2H4 or email: hkstampsandcovers@shaw.ca (1/6)

WANTED FOR AN EXHIBIT: Postcards or photographs of "S.S. (name) Park" WWII-era freighters and tankers, ie. "S.S. Mayfair Park". Also looking for covers from or to "Park" ships (may have foreign postage). Contact Jon Johnson (403) 253-8411 or jcjperfins@hotmail.com (1/5)

WANTED: 1920-1950 D.N.D. covers with postage stamps and "Director of Records" return address cachet. Prefer airmail, special delivery, and foreign usage for an exhibit. Contact Jon Johnson: jcjperfins@hotmail.com (3/5)

WANTED: Japanese Canadian Nisei volunteers and non-Japanese Canadians in WWII Intelligence Service Far East. Especially seeking Japanese Language School (S-20) drafts, interpreters, war crimes units etc. in South East Asia Command; Canadians associated with Nuremburg War Crimes Trials; Canadian POW's in Buchenwald/Colditz (Oflag IVC) and Stalag Luft III escapers; Canadians in Gibraltar/Malta; WWI Newfoundland. Contact the Editor at blueputtees@hotmail.com (4/5)

WANTED: Sewell Camp and Camp Hughes postal history. Roller cancellations, special delivery, and money order receipts sought. Anything considered. Darcy Hickson, R.R. #2, Box 24, Brandon, MB R7A 5Y2; (204) 724-2028; Darcy@hickson.ca (7/10)
